



(19)

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(11)

**EP 0 876 878 A3**

(12)

**EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(88) Date of publication A3:  
**16.12.1998 Bulletin 1998/51**

(51) Int. Cl.<sup>6</sup>: **B25B 13/10**

(43) Date of publication A2:  
**11.11.1998 Bulletin 1998/46**

(21) Application number: **98111962.1**

(22) Date of filing: **10.10.1996**

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
**AT BE CH DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU MC  
NL PT SE**

(30) Priority: **17.10.1995 US 544314**  
**16.04.1996 US 633860**

(62) Document number(s) of the earlier application(s) in  
accordance with Art. 76 EPC:  
**96307392.9 / 0 769 354**

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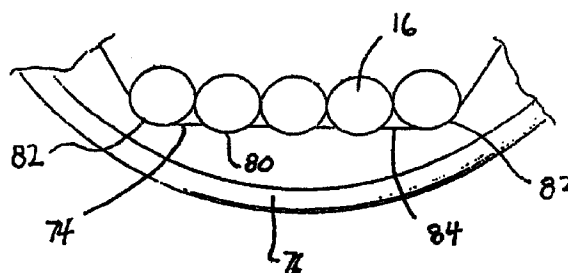
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(54) **Self forming socket**

(57) A self-forming socket having a plurality of retractable pins (16) bundled in parallel within a housing (20). The bundled pins may displace longitudinally and are biased by spring force away from a frame (20) on which the pins are slidably held. A spacer pin (30) may be positioned at the centre of the socket and is similarly biased away from the frame under spring force. When the socket is forced over a fastener, nut, or bolt head, groups of pins are pushed inwards towards the frame and into the housing thereby conforming the pins to the contours of the fastener. Each pin has a circular cross-section and the interior walls of the housing containing the bundled pins has a hexagonal shape and does not contain any right angles. The pins are packed in a hexagonal arrangement.

*FIG. 10*



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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 98 11 1962

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	GB 2 240 058 A (COLE ADRIAN THOMAS) 24 July 1991 * page 2, line 5 - line 11 * * page 2, line 25 - line 27; figures * ---	1	B25B13/10
A	US 3 698 267 A (DENNEY JON R) 17 October 1972 * figure 8 * -----	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			B25B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 22 October 1998	Examiner Ris, M
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ..... &amp; : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

EPO FORM 1503 03 82 (P04C01)